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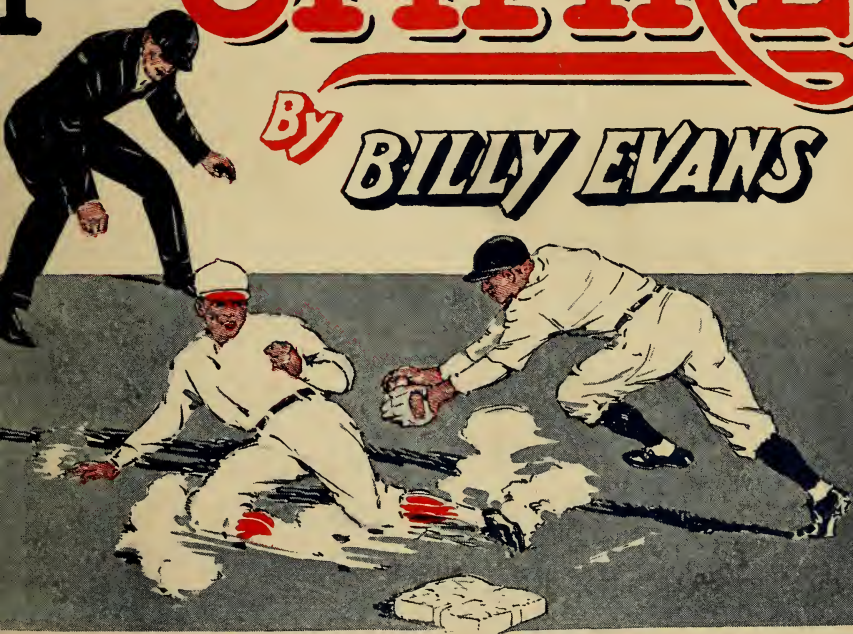
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# HOW TO

# UMPIRE

By

**BILLY EVANS**



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BILLY EVANS.



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No. 81R.

# HOW TO UMPIRE

BY  
BILLY EVANS

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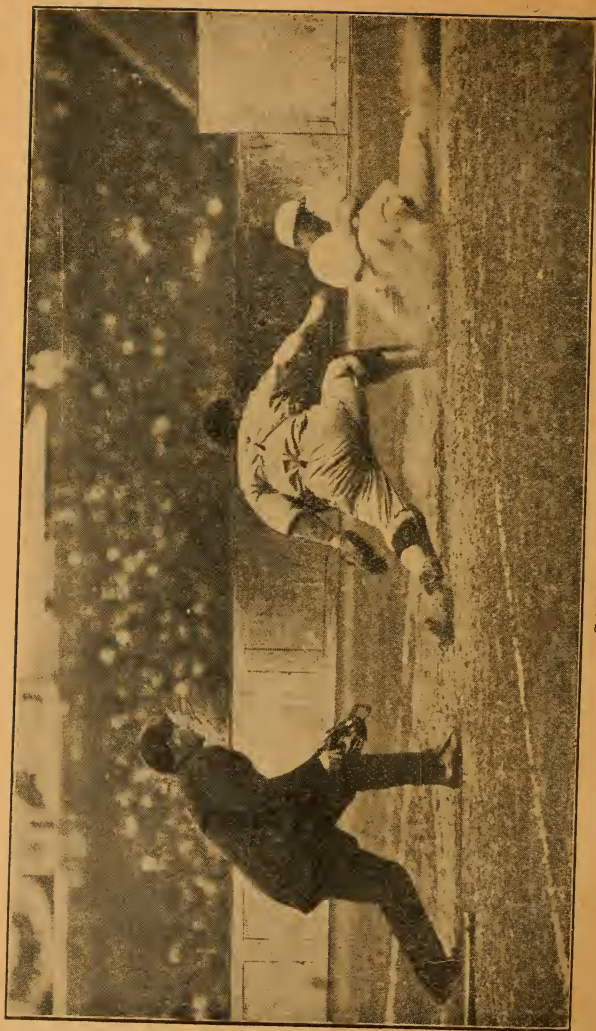
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The editor of Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide, Mr. John B. Foster, secretary of the New York National League base ball club, each year, in the Guide, offers to answer by mail questions relating to interpretations of the playing rules. All fans who submit questions should enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for reply, and address the inquiry to Mr. John B. Foster, Editor Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide, 45 Rose Street, New York City.

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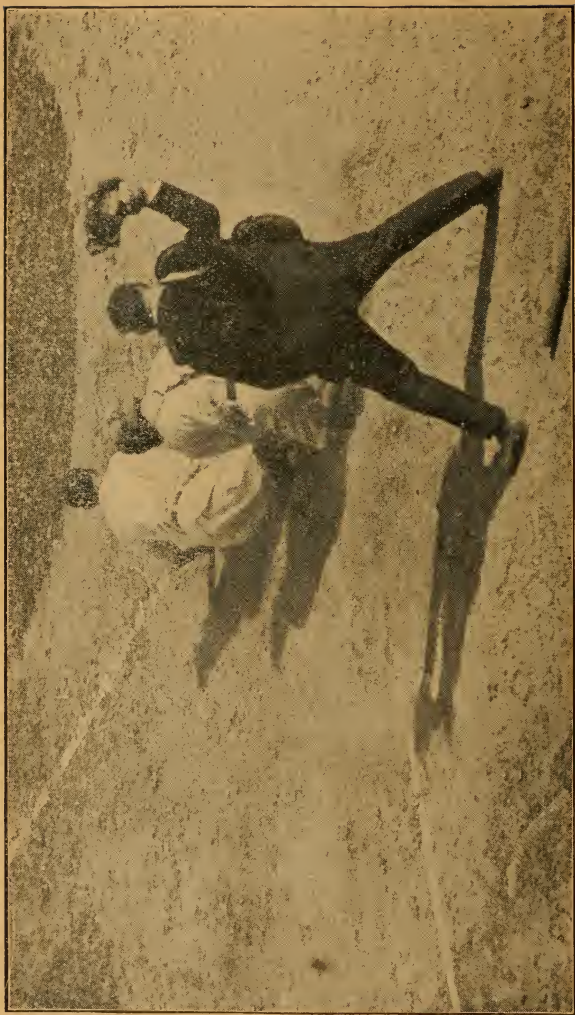


## Publishers' Note

When the publishers asked Mr. Evans to write a book on Umpiring, they did not expect an encyclopedia, but that is what it might well be called. Mr. Evans has gone into the matter of "How to Umpire" most conscientiously, explaining every point, and his instructions, if carefully followed, will enable the reader not only to become familiar with the duties of the most arduous and thankless position on the ball field but at the same time earn for the one who *knows*—and knows he knows—the respect of even the most rabid partisan.

Mr. Evans' ability as an arbiter and executive is familiar to every follower of base ball, and now this book, which will be a standard authority for years to come, furnishes another interesting sidelight on his versatility.

AMERICAN SPORTS PUBLISHING COMPANY.



OUT AT THE PLATE.

## Preface

Umpiring is a mixture of good eyesight, to which you must add plenty of common sense, an abundance of nerve, a dash of aggressiveness and a thorough knowledge of the rules. Good eyesight is, of course, most essential. To make the proper use of superior sight, the umpire must figure on being in the proper place when the play is completed. In order to do this he must draw on his source of common sense and good judgment, and figure out the correct angle at which to judge the plays. He must be the boss of the game. He must impress this feature on the players in a manner peculiar to himself. Few umpires would handle a complex situation in exactly the same manner. A thorough knowledge of the rules is most necessary, because a lack of the same will quickly destroy confidence. One is never so wise at the game but he can learn something new. I am constantly getting new views and opinions because of my close association with the game's leading umpires. Many of the chapters herein have been inspired by discussions with the game's best authorities. The book aims to give the beginner every bit of knowledge he needs; it aims to perhaps give the veteran a new angle to some intricate situations. The player who reads it is certain to get many new views and facts. The fan who reads it will get a new angle to which he perhaps never gave much consideration, the difficulties that beset the umpire.

BILLY EVANS.

## The Single Umpire System

Umpiring a ball game alone is a most difficult proposition. The major leagues as well as some of the faster minor leagues are of the belief that it is too arduous a task for one man and are using the double umpire system. In most of the minor leagues of a smaller classification, the double umpire system, because of the extra expense, is too great a luxury. Hence, in perhaps a big majority of the games played annually only one official is used. Such being the case, I will give my impressions of the best methods to pursue when umpiring a ball game alone.

The system of working entirely alone from back of the pitcher is now practically obsolete, although in amateur games where the umpire has no paraphernalia to protect him, he is really forced to assume such a position. My observation will be based on the theory that the umpire in charge has the proper equipment.

At the start of the game the umpire should assume a position back of the catcher. The style of position varies with the different major league umpires, so that it is a hard matter to state an exact position. I favor working about a foot or a foot and a half directly back of the catcher. The height of my position depends entirely on the attitude of the catcher. I make it a point to try and be just a trifle taller than the catcher, as he sets himself to receive each pitch. Such a style necessitates



that you continually shift positions to suit the actions of the catcher. I favor such a system because it enables one to constantly keep the ball in sight, a very essential feature. It also affords the umpire considerable protection, since to a large extent he fortifies himself behind the catcher. I am also of the opinion that in crouching with the catcher on each delivery, the umpire is in a much better position to correctly judge the low ball, admittedly one of the most difficult tasks that confront the umpire. When I first came to the majors, I worked from an upright position at all times, and never shifted at all. That is a system some of the leading umpires still pursue, but I have been won over to the system I have just described. I feel that it is vastly superior.

Umpires small of stature, who have trouble working directly behind the catcher, are often forced to work just outside or inside of the position assumed by the back-stop, particularly if he is a big fellow. There are some umpires who prefer working not over six inches back of the catcher, while I favor from twelve to eighteen inches away. I like such a scheme, because there is small likelihood of ever coming into contact with the receiver and offering an alibi for something that didn't turn out all right.

Getting over the plays is a most valuable asset to an umpire. It enables him to be excused for what often appears to be a mistake, because he has made it apparent that he is trying. Thus from a position back of the catcher, taken at the start of the game, the umpire should make it a point to follow closely each hit. If the batter

hits the ball to the infield, the umpire should move into the diamond perhaps half the way down the line and assume a position about midway between the foul line and the pitcher's box, so that he may view the play from the proper angle. Also, in the case of an overthrow, should the runner try for second, the umpire is in a position to get right over the play, almost in advance of the runner.

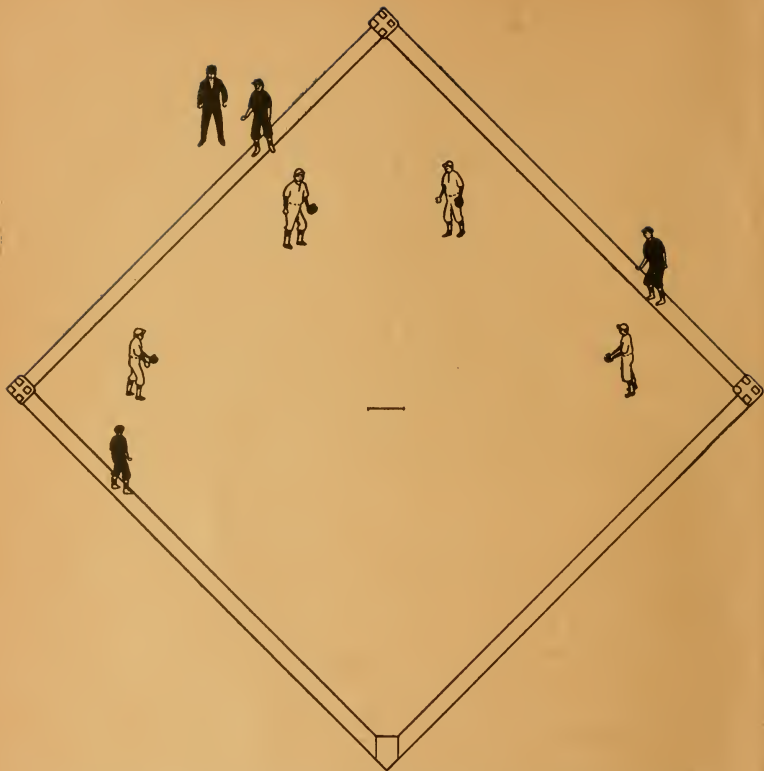
In case of a base-hit it is usually wise for the umpire to cut into the infield much after the manner of an infield hit, only that he should go farther into the infield. First, because he should shift back of the pitcher the moment a runner gets on first, and, secondly, because he will be right in line for a decision at second if the batter should try for two bases.

With a runner on first only, the umpire remains back of the pitcher. There are various reasons for his so doing. With a runner on first, the pitcher frequently makes snap throws to that bag in an effort to catch him. An umpire would be almost helpless in trying to decide that play from back of the catcher. In case the runner tries to steal, once again he is in a perfect position to get right over the play. Should there be a force at second, a try for a double play, or a decision at first, he is correctly positioned.

The moment a runner reaches second or third; that is, with men on first and second; first, second and third; second and third, or on either one of the two last named bases only, the umpire should work from back of the catcher. In such cases with a run or runs in sight, a

play is very apt to come up at the plate, which enables him to be in the best possible position to judge it.

On sharply hit balls down the first or third base line, the umpire when working back of the pitcher is at a great disadvantage. His only hope is to move over toward the foul line as quickly as possible. In fact, I believe that the umpire should be up and doing, in action on every play. It is just about as easy to move around as stand still and is always far more satisfactory. At all times, but when working alone in particular, the umpire should never lose sight of the ball. If, with the double umpire system one official falls from grace, the other one is almost certain to come to the rescue.



### SHOWING POSITION OF FIELD UMPIRE WITH THREE ON BASES

Very often in base ball the umpire finds the following situation confronting him: the bases are filled, and the score is such that the team in the field figures it must make an effort to get the runner at the plate. Such an action calls for the playing in close by the infield. The question that now arises is what is the best position for the umpire to assume, in order to be in the best possible situation to see any play that may arise. Since the infield is in close, I have always believed it a wise move to shift back of the infield. Since the desire is to make a hurried play, the umpire can in no way interfere if he is back of the line of defense. Otherwise it is always possible to use the umpire as an alibi, in case the defense fails, by saying his presence interfered with the play. I have always believed a position almost directly back of the shortstop and runner as the best. Such a position gives the umpire an excellent view of second and third, should any play be made on a runner at either base, through the medium of a snap throw from catcher or a throw from the pitcher. His view of plays at first will not be quite so good, but by anticipating such plays and moving in the direction of the play as made, the umpire can get an excellent view.



## The Double Umpire System

The double umpire system has done much to solve the problem of running a ball game. One official admittedly cannot always care for the situations that can arise in a ball game. It would be necessary for said official to have eyes in the back of his head, when two situations arise in directly opposite directions. For instance, we will say a play is being made at first, and at the same time the fielder at third interferes with the runner rounding that base. It is impossible for one man to be looking two places at the same time.

With the double umpire system, the man calling balls and strikes is regarded as umpire-in-chief. He shall have full charge of the game and be responsible for its proper conduct. The American League is perhaps the only organization which pays little or no attention to the umpire-in-chief theory. President Johnson places the two officials on the same equality, expects them to work together, and follow a certain line of given instructions, which I will detail under another chapter, entitled, "The Double Umpire System in the American League."

It shall be the duty of the so-called umpire-in-chief to call the balls and strikes. He must decide whether a batted ball is fair or foul. He shall call the balks on the pitcher. He shall rule on all batting-out-of-order plays. He shall determine all interferences at the plate, whether on the part of the catcher or batsman. He shall deter-

mine whether or not a batsman in running to first, stays within the confines of his lines, or interferes with a play being made upon him. He shall determine all ground rules that are necessary, and consult with the opposing managers as to what rules shall cover the various technicalities. If unable to have the managers agree, he shall make an arbitrary rule.

The field umpire shall take up his position at first base. His primary duty will be to pass judgment on all plays that come up at first base. Just what is the best position to assume is a matter that is hard to agree upon, as few of the leading umpires have exactly the same style. The principal thing for the field umpire to keep in mind is that he always should be in a position where he will have the ball constantly in sight. This eliminates any chance for him to miss a play in which the ball is juggled or dropped and almost instantly regained. When acting as field umpire I always take up a position about fifteen or twenty feet back of first base, and about three feet in foul territory. I assume such a position simply to have a working basis. A great many umpires work much closer to the base. On balls hit to the second baseman I change my position but slightly, because I am in a good position to keep my eyes constantly on the ball. On balls hit to third or short, I move up at the start of the play until my position is perhaps six feet from first base, but toward the home plate this time. This enables me to always keep the play in front of me. If one stays behind the first baseman on throws from third or short, he allows the fielder to get between the runner and the ball, thereby

causing him to lose sight of it, a condition one always should avoid.

Tommy Connolly, one of the game's greatest umpires, always goes in on the diamond on all the plays that come up at first. He is always in fair territory when giving his rulings, while most umpires make their decision from foul ground. Moving in on fair territory has the distinct advantage of always having the play directly in front of you. The only disadvantage is that one is more likely to be hit by a badly thrown ball, although during his long career such a thing has never happened to Mr. Connolly.

The plate and the field umpire should always work in perfect harmony to get the best results. They should always make it a point to see that every possible chance for a play is covered.

(1) With a runner on first, the plate umpire should always run down to third, ready for a play on a ball hit fair, whether a bunted ball, a tap to the infield, or a base-hit. Very often on such plays the runner on first attempts to advance to third. With a runner on third, and more than one base occupied, the plate umpire shall decide whether the runner on third leaves that base before a fly ball is caught. With only third base occupied, it is the duty of the field umpire to handle such a play.

(2) When a runner is caught between third and home, when more than one base is occupied, it is the duty of the plate umpire to follow the play nearest the plate, and render a decision, even though the out is finally made at third base.

(3) With more than one runner on the bases, and a play comes up which causes one of the said runners to round third for home, it is advisable for the plate umpire to observe the runner rounding third and see that he is not interfered with.

(4) Very often on fly balls hit to the outfield, which turn out to be difficult chances, it is hard for the plate umpire in a great many cases to decide whether the ball was legally caught or trapped. With the double umpire system, the field umpire, who is much closer to the play, should run out into the outfield if necessary, and by a wave of the hand notify the plate umpire as to the legality of the catch. The plate umpire in the meantime should watch the base-runners, since the field umpire is in no position to observe them.

(5) It shall be the duty of the plate umpire to rule on all infield flies. It is up to him to determine whether or not he believes they can be handled.



## The Double Umpire System in the American League

There is no umpire-in-chief in the American League with two officials in charge of a game. The authority of the two umpires is equal. According to the playing code, only the umpire-in-chief has the right to forfeit the game. In the American League either official has the right and would be upheld by Mr. Johnson, although the American League President dislikes the idea of forfeiture and wants his men to refrain from so doing, if it is possible to get around the situation in any other way.

The double umpire system was inaugurated to do away with many of the mistakes that occur with only one man in charge of the game. It became apparent several years ago that plays would get away from a single official, but that such a thing would not likely occur with two men officiating. It is still possible for an umpire to slip up on a play that comes under his particular jurisdiction, but usually the other umpire in charge has seen the happening. In relation to such particular happenings the system used in the American League differs greatly from that followed in most other organizations.

American League umpires when in doubt as to any play that involves something other than a mere question of judgment are instructed to request information from their partner as to the point in dispute. In fact, the

instruction is even more to the point, for Mr. Johnson favors immediate assistance on such plays from the umpire who realizes the other umpire is in error. I refer particularly to plays that involve the dropping of a ball or an interference. Very often an umpire will call a runner out and then immediately turn his back on the play. The ruling would have been the correct one had the ball been held, but it so happens the fielder drops the ball just as the official turns his back and is able to recover same before the umpire can be apprised of the error. Invariably the other official has seen the dropping of the ball. In most leagues the umpire under whom the play comes for a ruling stands pat on his first decision, because he failed to see that the ball was dropped. The other umpire, because it is not his play, does not interfere, even though he knows the ruling was absolutely wrong. In the American League President Johnson favors immediate assistance from the umpire who did see the play and gives him the right to simply overrule the original decision, or, if not, to inform the official who made the ruling that the ball was dropped. The same holds good on an interference play that is missed by the umpire under whose jurisdiction such a play comes.

The American League executive favors coöperation at all times between the two officials, when in doubt on plays that involve conditions other than mere judgment. On such plays he wants the umpire making the ruling to stand pat. But when an outside condition enters into the affair he wants the men to coöperate.

## Methods of Conducting a Ball Game

The successful umpire must be the master of every situation. He must rule firmly, but not necessarily with an iron hand. He must instill confidence in the players over whom he is presiding. That confidence can only be won by demonstrating beyond a doubt that he has the proper qualifications to umpire, nerve, good judgment, a knowledge of the rules, and plenty of good common sense. Once the player is firmly convinced that the official is calling them without fear or favor, he will have won a certain amount of respect that greatly tends to make his work much easier.

The modern umpire is clothed with unlimited authority, which is as it should be. However, it is a sad mistake to make improper use of his best weapon. Some officials go on the field seeking to immediately put into action the wheels of authority which they control. Their manner and style is aggressive, their conduct such as to show they are almost inviting trouble. Literally they have a chip on their shoulder. To my mind that is entirely the wrong system to pursue. One will find enough trouble on the ball field without looking for it. It will just naturally come. The longer one avoids trouble by a display of diplomacy that in no way reflects on his dignity, the more fortunate he can count himself.

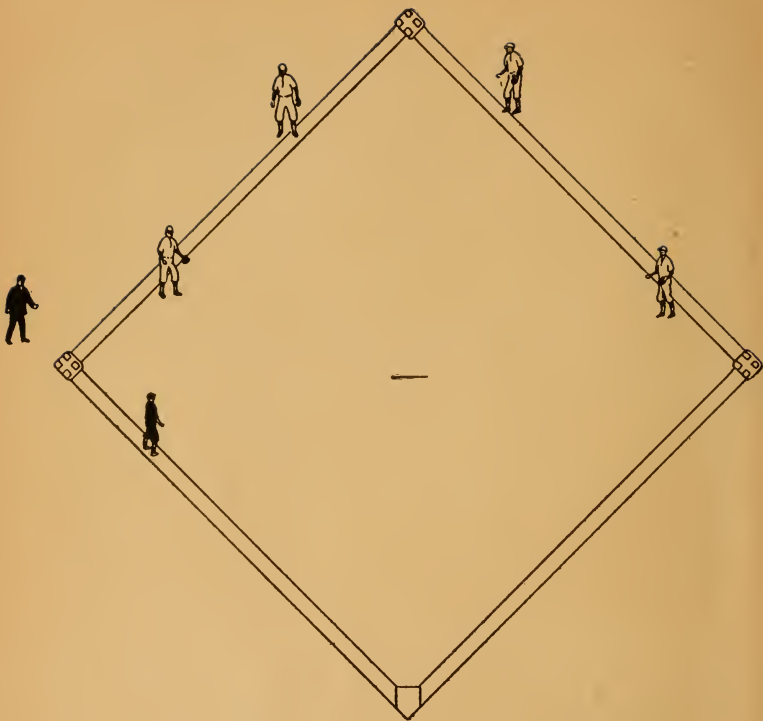
There are some umpires who go on the ball field looking as though they were on trial for their life. Every

feature is set, it is a serious proposition, they can see no humor in any situation that may arise. Of some umpires they do say that no one has ever seen them smile. I regard the smile with much favor. I believe a smile and a word of warning will go much farther with the average player than a scowl coupled with a threat, provided there is any gray matter lurking in said player's head. Occasionally the umpire runs into an athlete who must always hear the crack of the whip to be kept in line.

The successful umpire demands the respect of the player, and in turn he should show proper respect to the player, just so long as the conduct of the player merits it. The umpire, because of his unlimited authority, should not address a player in terms which would cause the player to be ejected from the game if he so addressed the umpire. That is taking an unfair advantage. In some cases, instead of putting a player out of the game, I have slipped him a line of talk flavored with tabasco and let him remain, because I believed the offense was equal. That is not the desired system, nor the proper system, but occasionally it affords the umpire more satisfaction than the mere ejection of the player from the game. The proper way to meet such situations is never to place yourself on the same basis as the player. Instead of replying in like terms, let him do the raving, and you remain silent. It is the ideal system, but as I have said, every now and then it is impossible to follow it, as the umpire is only human after all.

Every umpire has his strenuous afternoons when everything goes wrong. It is best to try to forget them.

If you constantly worry, you had better quit. Try to start every game with a clean slate. When the day is over leave the troubles of the afternoon in the dressing room. One cannot be vindictive and be a good umpire, as it is bound to seriously affect his work. Work on the theory that every player is a gentleman, accord him the treatment he deserves until he demonstrates to you that he is a rowdy, then in a gentlemanly way, if such a thing is possible, handle him a bit rougher than he is trying to handle you. If you seek respect, you must give a like amount.



### SHOWING POSITION OF FIELD UMPIRE WITH RUNNER ON THIRD

With a runner on third and less than two out, what is the best position for the field umpire? It becomes his duty with only one man on, to see that the runner holds his base, before trying to advance on a fly ball that is caught. In such cases, it is the consensus of opinion of most umpires that the best position is to stand 6 to 8 feet back of third base and about a foot in foul territory. This gives the umpire a perfect view of any play that might be made on the runner at third. The moment a fly ball is hit the umpire should move up to third, and so position himself that he is on a line with the player making the catch and has the runner before him. In case a ball is hit to an infielder and a play is being made at first, all he need do is cut in on the infield and get as close as possible.



## Offenses That Merit Punishment

I am often asked what causes this or that player's ejection from the game. The fans see the disputes but seldom hear what is said, hence the reason for wanting to know just how the umpire reaches a conclusion when he puts a player out of the game. That is indeed a difficult question to answer. The successful umpire must be an excellent judge of human nature, and he must make an even more careful study of the players' disposition than a pitcher does of a batter's weakness. Thus what may mean ejection from the game for a certain player, might merely result in a reprimand for some other athlete.

It is an excellent thing for the umpire not to hear too much on the ball field. By making it appear that he has not heard certain things, he can escape situations in a graceful manner that might otherwise turn out to be serious affairs. The late Jack Sheridan once said to me: "An umpire's success is in a large measure determined by his ability to hear the things he should hear, and see only the things he should see." I have on many occasions found that to be a most valuable bit of advice.

I figure that an umpire must be guided by existing conditions in a great many cases. It is possible for him to overlook an exchange of words with some player, if there is no one within hearing. The same remark, if overheard by a visiting player, would mean that the umpire in order

to maintain discipline, would be forced to put the player out of the game. That is merely an instance of what Sheridan meant, when he said an umpire should hear only those things he should hear.

The umpire does not care to be shown up before the crowd. In no way can a player bring more ridicule on an official than by his actions. It doesn't take much on the part of the player to arouse the wrath of the crowd. A shake of the head, the stepping out of the batter's box, or any one of a score of things, can in an unmistakable way call the attention of the crowd to the fact that the player doesn't look on the ruling with favor. Such actions are seriously objected to by any umpire. No official will resent an argument properly presented, and no official will resent a player's opinion that he has missed a play, if he so complains by word of mouth. It is the player who seeks to alibi by some grand stand play that gets the umpire peeved.

In this connection there are a number of stunts which most umpires regard as sufficient cause to eject the player from the game. The throwing of a glove high in the air after a decision that displeases is almost certain to draw the gate, unless it escaped the umpire's attention. As Umpire Bill Byron once facetiously remarked, the balls were made to be thrown and the gloves worn. The grabbing or shoving of an official after a decision that does not meet with approval, is another stunt not regarded with favor. These are but a few of the many grand stand stunts that do not meet with umpirical favor.

## Looking After the Minor Details

Prior to starting play on any grounds the umpire should carefully survey his field and note any peculiarities of same. If there are any features about the field that might cause a dispute, the umpire should get the two managers together and arrange details which would cover any situation that may arise. In a great many cases the reason for getting a ground rule on a certain feature may seem trivial, yet a game often hinges on such a technicality, and if the official has no definite working basis, he is bound to find himself in serious trouble.

I am often asked what attention is paid to the coacher. I have always believed that pepper and enthusiasm by the coacher adds much to the life of the game. For that reason I always let the coacher go the limit, just so long as he confines himself to talking to the batter or base-runner and pays no attention to the opposition. The moment he tries to annoy the opposition he is either silenced or sent back to the bench.

The umpire should make it a point to appear on the field in neat attire. The umpire who goes on the field without paying attention to his personal appearance at once creates the impression that his work will not be unlike his appearance. He should avoid getting into arguments whenever possible, either with player or spectator, because someone must lose an argument, and if you avoid them, there is never a chance of getting the wrong end of the decision.

## Don'ts for Umpires

Don't go on the ball field with a chip on your shoulder. You will find plenty of trouble without looking for it.

Umpires hate to lose arguments. Therefore, avoid them whenever possible, and you greatly decrease your chance of losing.

Never enter into debates with the spectators. Unfortunately for the umpire, the base ball fan seems to have the divine right to say what he pleases and the easiest way out is to pay no attention.

No umpire will for a minute stand for a ball player showing him up on the field. Likewise, no umpire, because he has the authority, should hold the player up to ridicule without just cause.

Spectators like to see the regular lineup in action. The ejection of several players from the game usually robs it of much of its interest. Always try to give the spectators a run for their money, if it is possible to do so, and still maintain the dignity of your position.

It is often possible to escape trouble by not seeing some of the things you shouldn't see, and giving the impression that you didn't hear some of the things that you shouldn't have heard.

A smile and a kind word often works to far greater advantage than a frown and sarcasm. A lot of umpires go on the field wearing the look of a man about to go to the electric chair.

Always maintain strict discipline, but don't do it in such a way that you create the impression that you are a slave driver and all others must dance to the crack of your whip.

Never lose sight of the ball. If you know where it is at all times, you are not going to lose very many plays. It is worse for someone to pull the hidden ball trick and the umpire not to see it, than it is for the player who has been trapped.

Don't turn your head and look the other way after you have given a decision. A lot of things can happen while you are looking in the opposite direction.

Show a little "pepper" in your work. If the umpire is always on the alert, the players invariably get the spirit. If the umpire is content to have the game drag, the players seldom offer any objection.

There are always two ways of doing things on the ball field—the right and wrong way—and invariably the right way proves by far the easiest.

Impress the players that you are the boss, that you intend to run the game with a firm hand, and they will let you run it. Give them the notion that you can be swayed, and they will literally run you out of the game.

A lot of people say umpires are not human. They are wrong. It is human to err, and umpires err. If they made as many mistakes as most fans insist they do, they would indeed be very human.

After having made what appears to be a mistake, and it so happens the next decision favors the team against whom the mistake was made, a lot of foolish fans say,

the umpire is simply evening up things. That is all wrong. No umpire who ever succeeded for a minute adopted such a policy. It is bad enough to have made the first mistake, to even up simply adds another blunder.

All umpires are honest. If you have the slightest doubt about it, make it a point to question the honesty of an official some day after he has been through a strenuous contest.

Don't render your decisions too quickly. Nothing makes an umpire look worse than to render a decision before the play is completed, even though he is right. Often something happens that makes the umpire wish he had not figured the play in advance.

A good appearance always creates a pleasing first impression. Most umpires who are so slovenly in their dress, show a similar inclination in their work.

Never allow a coacher to call plays before you decide them. If you happen to decide his way, the opposition will insist he is getting to you first. Usually a word to the coacher that you will do the umpiring, and that all he is required to do is coach, will end the trouble. If diplomacy fails to settle the case, there is always room on the bench or in the clubhouse for one more.

Make it a point to start your games promptly on time. The public likes it and the public must be pleased. Any time you start late, you are beginning the day with a mistake. The fewer mistakes you make, the better umpire you are supposed to be.

Make it a point to treat every ball player like a gentleman. If you should find certain players don't conform



to that standard, treat them otherwise. If certain players try to make life miserable to you, your only salvation is to make it more miserable for them.

Always make it a point to be on top of a play. If you are right over the play and miss it, you are far more liable to get away with such a decision than if you never moved, and gave the play while standing fifteen or twenty feet away.

An umpire must use consideration and common sense in running a ball game. If he ejected a player every time he had cause, few contests would go the required nine innings. In the heat of battle players often do and say things they do not mean, and often it is possible to overlook some infractions of this sort, without an injurious effect.

## Umpires Are Human After All

Umpires are human, despite all assertions to the contrary. Apparently a great many people believe that the men who give the decisions on the diamond are composed of some strange substance—possibly mineral or vegetable or animal substance, but certainly not a human one. I once met a young lady who, upon hearing that I was an umpire, seemed greatly surprised to learn that I had a father and mother and sisters and brothers; that I lived in a house; ate real food; was married—in short that I was a human being, able to love and hate, and if stuck with a pin would very likely say “ouch!” or something worse.

Each day when the umpire steps on the ball field he has eighteen active athletes arrayed against him, as well as two live managers, and an imposing bunch of bench warmers. There is also the crowd to be considered, for as a rule the majority of those present agree with the umpire only when he renders a decision that is in favor of the home team. Several years ago a very fair minded fan asked me this rather pertinent question:

“When you go on the ball field, who do you try to please, and what effects do the kicks of the players and the ravings of the crowd have on you?”

“When I go on the field I try to satisfy myself,” I replied. “I give the plays just as I see them, without fear or favor. When I satisfy myself I feel that I have

umpired a good game. Often I leave the game anything but pleased with my work, for I often realize too late that I have erred. Frequently I have umpired the very best of ball, and still been severely criticised for rulings which I knew were absolutely correct. If an umpire catered to each player and gave the crowd the slightest consideration in the rendering of decisions, he would be in the madhouse inside of a month. The most pleasant part of a ball game to me is when the last man is retired in the ninth and the crowd files peacefully out and no one blames the umpire for the defeat."

Despite the fact that umpiring is considered a difficult position to fill with satisfaction, it is surprising the number of people who are willing to take a chance. In the winter time, when the stove leagues are in session, is when the umpire crop is most plentiful. When the snow is on the ground, the heads of the majors and minors are flooded with applications from men anxious to prove what a great mistake is being made in keeping them out of the big show. By spring, when the season is ready to start, many lose their desire to try to satisfy fandom and decide to stick to their winter job. By July the heat of the sun and the withering sarcasm of the fan usually has burned up the crop and officials are eagerly sought.

Several years ago an enthusiastic young umpire dropped into my dressing room at the Chicago grounds. He wanted to get a job in a minor league. A few minutes later a well known minor league president dropped in to see me. I introduced the umpire to the president. "I can use a good umpire," said the president, "but I

can't afford to pay much money, as my league is an easy one for the umpires. All you have to do is to satisfy the players, managers, club owners, public and the press. and you won't have any trouble holding your job." Following my suggestions, the young umpire declined the job. It was too easy.

"I wouldn't hold down your job for all the money in the world," is an expression that every umpire hears hundreds of times a year. But most umpires are perfectly content to work for a very small portion of the world's "mazuma." Most people regard them as a necessary evil. However, I think they are very necessary, and if you ever watched an important game that was umpired by a couple of players, you will agree with me. And most umpires are satisfied with their lot. I with mine I hope to be a big leaguer for many years to come.

## The Fan and the Umpire

"Your job would never suit me," remarked an acquaintance of mine as he stepped into our dressing room one afternoon last summer. The game had been a bitter extra inning battle, which the home team had lost because of a close decision at the plate. Throughout the game all of the close plays seemed to break against the home club, and several peculiar plays came up which created considerable argument. To make matters worse, the fans, not familiar with the facts, roared. "I couldn't stand to be abused when I knew I was right," added the friend. My partner had just explained the reasons for deciding several of the plays as we did. "I am sure there would be less criticism if every fan at some time would be unfortunate enough to have to officiate as umpire in some important game," remarked the fan after he had listened to the explanation. I had to laugh, for it was an opinion I had long entertained.

It is to be regretted that every fan cannot at some time act as umpire in a ball game of some importance. A game in which there would be keen rivalry, and the outcome of great importance to both teams, would be the best to educate the fan in the troubles of the arbitrator. It would be a good thing if every umpire would occasionally attend an important game as a spectator. The experience would prove especially beneficial if the umpire as a spectator, should pull strongly for one of the

clubs to win and see the chances of his favorites killed time after time because of some adverse decision by the umpire. This would give the fan a chance to get all the thrills that come to an umpire in a big game, and it would give the umpire a chance to understand why the fans rave when one close decision after another is given against the favorite.

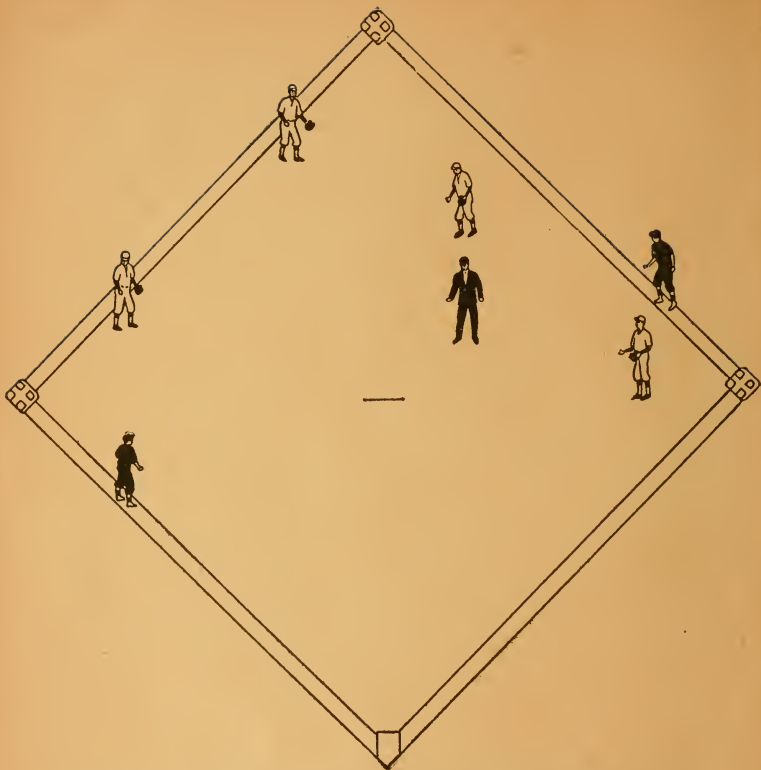
I never really appreciated the position of the fan until the fall of 1911 when in the role of writer I saw the world series between the Athletics and the Giants. While I refrained from rooting like a dyed-in-the-wool fan, decision after decision came up that first made the Athletic fans tear their hair and the next moment made the Giant rooters rave like madmen.

Plays look different from a position in the grand stand. One play after another came up in the world series that looked one way from a seat in the grand stand, while the umpire ruled just the opposite. Many of the plays would have figured prominently in the run-getting had they been decided differently. Is it any wonder that fans raved when the official gave decision after decision opposite to the way the play looked to them and against their favorites.

I realized things were taking place on the ball field with which the people in the stands were not familiar. From my experience as an umpire, I knew some little things that could not be discerned from the grand stand were the deciding factors in the rulings. I knew the umpires must be right and the spectators wrong from the attitude assumed by the players. After each game



I went downtown with the umpires and was enlightened on the plays that had looked doubtful to me as a spectator. On a certain play in which the runner appeared to be an easy out the fielder had failed to touch him. On another play, when it seemed as if the base-runner had been successful in stealing a base, it developed he would have been, had he not overslid and been touched out before he could recover the bag. On a third play, where it seemed as if the batter was an easy out at first, it was explained the throw had pulled the first baseman just off the bag. In every case some little factor that was not noticed by the spectators proved to be the deciding point. Unfortunately, the umpires have no way of explaining these things to the fans as they did to me. If there was some way in which the spectators could be informed as to what really happened on the field, much less abuse would be handed the umpire.



### SHOWING POSITION OF FIELD UMPIRE WITH RUNNERS ON FIRST AND THIRD

With runners on first and third and the infield playing half way, assume a position about forty feet back of the pitcher, and about six feet to his left. An attempted theft of second, to draw a throw that may offer a chance for the runner to score from third, is the play the umpire must anticipate. On this play the second baseman cuts in to cut off the throw and make a play at the plate. If he sees the man on third does not intend to try to go home, he lets the throw go through. It then becomes the duty of the shortstop to handle it and try for a play at second. Collins and Barry, when with the Athletics, made this play to perfection. The umpire on this play, at the start of the throw should move up close to the pitcher, so as to in no way interfere with the play.

## Play That Always Creates A Dispute

What are the rights of a pitcher when he attempts to get a runner at the plate after once getting on the rubber with the ball in his possession? If a runner takes too great a lead off first to suit the pitcher, he has a right to drive him back by stepping in the direction of the first baseman and then throwing the ball to that player. If a runner on first makes a break for second, and the pitcher's attention is called to the fact, he has a right to wheel around and throw the ball to second base to head off the runner, first stepping in the direction of the base to which he desires to throw. He has the same right to intercept a runner going from second to third.

The trouble comes when a runner makes a dash for the plate from third, after the pitcher gets on the rubber. The contention is raised that since the pitcher has a right to throw to any other base from his position on the rubber, he should have the same right to throw to the plate. The dispute, of course, hinges on the fact that when the pitcher delivers a ball to the plate while standing on the rubber it is regarded as a legal pitch.

Recently a play came up in the Western League which caused a great deal of discussion. The umpire wrote me about the play and asked me what I thought about it. It happened that the identical play came up in the American League eight or nine years ago. It resulted in a protested game and caused President Johnson to issue an

interpretation of the play for his umpires. Here are the conditions: The score is a tie, it is the last half of the ninth, the bases are filled and the count is three and two on the batter. The pitcher with the ball gets on the rubber ready to pitch. He has made no preliminary motions, his arms are at his sides. The moment he gets on the rubber, the runner on third starts for the plate. The pitcher standing on the rubber ready to pitch is slightly bewildered. He hurriedly delivers the ball to the plate. It is a wild pitch, missing the plate by a foot. The catcher gets the ball and touches the runner coming in from third. The Western League umpire and the American League umpire called the runner out.

The American League game was protested, as was the Western League contest. The team at bat insisted the pitcher had made a legal delivery when he threw the ball to the plate, since he was on the rubber ready to pitch. As the delivery was wild, it was insisted that the umpire should have declared it a ball, making the fourth to the batter, entitling him to first base, and forcing the winning run over the plate. The contention of the umpire was that the pitcher had a perfect right to make a play at the plate, just as he has to first, second or third. When making a play at first, the pitcher is forced to step toward that base and then throw the ball to that base, if he is on the rubber. When making a play to second or third, while on the rubber, he must step in the direction of the base, but need not throw it if he deems it unwise.

There is no denying the right of the pitcher to make a play at the plate, but if he is on the rubber some method

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for making that play is necessary. If the pitcher, while standing on the rubber, threw the ball to the batter, it is regarded as a legal pitch. Consequently it was necessary that some ruling be made on such a happening. President Johnson ruled that it was necessary for the pitcher to step off the rubber, by taking a step to either side or the rear, when desiring to make a play to the plate to intercept a runner after once getting on the rubber ready to pitch. That is the interpretation in vogue in the American League and makes an easy play for the umpire on what appears to be a very difficult problem at the first glance.

## Correct Ruling That Was Nearly Fatal

During my career as an umpire I have probably made many decisions which might be regarded as cause for fandom to say unkind things about me, and be the excuse for things coming my way that I didn't ask for. On the other hand, a perfectly correct decision that was in favor of the home club almost proved my undoing. So many fans have that incident confused that I will relate it, because in many ways it was a most unusual happening. The game was played in the fall of 1907 at St. Louis. Detroit was the opposing club and an overflow crowd was in attendance. In those days the double umpire system was not in vogue.

Because of the overflow crowd a hit into the crowd had been agreed on as good for two bases. There was a swinging gate about six feet long out in the left field fence, about ten feet above the ground, about which I knew nothing. It was used to facilitate the delivery of bottled goods into the park.

On the day in question it was extremely hot. Someone in the overflow crowd had discovered the gate, and by opening it found it provided a light breeze. Up to the fifth inning Detroit led by a run. In that inning Harry Howell, who was pitching for St. Louis, hit a ball into left field. As I followed its course I was surprised to see the opening in the fence. A few minutes before I had observed nothing wrong. I afterwards



learned the gate had been opened only a few seconds before Howell hit the ball.

It was my bad luck to have the ball pass squarely through the opening. When Howell made the hit I had run toward third base to follow the ball more closely. When it passed through the opening I was about fifteen feet back of third base. Howell paused at second base and I motioned for him to continue home, with the run that tied up the game. When the St. Louis fans saw I had allowed Howell a home run instead of a two-base-hit they went wild with delight. As he trotted from second to the plate unmolested he was given a great ovation.

The Detroit team set up the claim the hit was good for only two bases—a foolish contention. I was surrounded by Tiger players, all talking at the same time. There is no fairer man in base ball than Hughey Jennings, the famous leader of the Detroit team, and I told that gentleman the easiest way to settle the argument was to get rid of the players, and the two of us would thrash it out, which he proceeded to do.

“A hit into the crowd is only good for two bases,” said Hughey.

“Right you are,” I replied, “but this hit didn’t go into the crowd. It went over the crowd and out of the grounds.”

“But the gate should have been closed,” argued Jennings.

“It wasn’t,” I replied, “the blame for which I will take. When a ball goes out of playing territory, how is it regarded?” I asked.

"A home run, of course," answered Jennings.

In the meantime pop bottles were being thrown from all directions, but few had the force to carry close enough to do any harm.

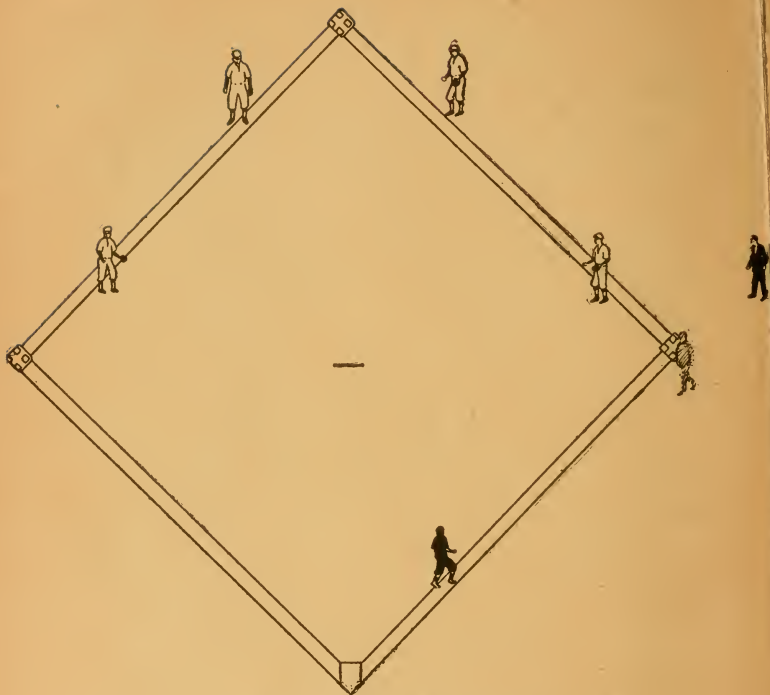
"Then the argument is settled," I stated. "Let us continue the game. If we don't get away from here some one will be getting killed."

The next thing I remember was when I came to in the hospital and inquired what happened. After the nurse had told me in a few words all she was allowed to say about the case she switched the conversation by asking me who "Kid-So-and-So" was. I told her he was a well-known player.

"You are not very fond of him?" she asked. When I agreed that I was not very fond of him she told me that I had put him out of the game only four times in the past half hour.



SAFE AT THIRD.



### SHOWING POSITION OF FIELD UMPIRE WITH NO ONE ON BASES

With no one on bases, a good position for the umpire to stand is about fifteen feet back of first and about three feet in foul territory. On balls hit to the second baseman he need not change his position, for he is in an excellent place to see whether or not the ball is dropped or juggled. On balls hit to the shortstop or third baseman, it is best to move up about five or six feet in front of first base, that is toward the plate and about two or three feet in foul territory. This enables the umpire to always have the ball in sight and the play in front of him.

## The Toughest Decision I Ever Made

Umpiring is merely a matter of judgment, and opinions of plays naturally differ. Two men sitting side by side in the grand stand may have opposite opinions of a dozen plays. Frequently their opinions are the result of partisan feelings. If the umpire put every play up to the fans for a decision, base ball would be a wild affair. Perhaps what was the toughest decision in my career I put up to the fans and they answered it correctly, although against the team they were rooting for. They did not know what they were doing and imagined they were aiding their favorites by expressing themselves as they did.

The game was at Forbes Field in the fall of 1909, and was a world series contest between Detroit and Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh had taken the first game, and wanted a commanding lead by annexing the second contest. The decision I refer to came up in the opening inning of this game.

A crowd of over 32,000 was on hand. Such a crowd taxed the seating and standing capacity. Temporary stands had been erected along the right field foul line from just back of first base to the stands that stretched from right to left field. It was agreed a hit bouncing into the stands in foul territory should go for two bases. This was to guard against fluke home runs, as it would have been possible for a puny fly to drop safely back of first

base, and by having been given the proper "English," as a billiard player would say, bound into these temporary stands. A hit that bounded into the stands on fair territory—those that skirted the outfield—was to go as a home run.

Bobby Byrne of Pittsburgh was the first to face Bill Donovan in the opening inning and went to first on four straight balls. Tommy Leach doubled to right, scoring Byrne. It looked as if the Pirates would pile up a lead that would cinch the game. Fred Clarke's sacrifice, Donovan to Tom Jones, moved Leach to third. Hans Wagner loomed up big at this moment, but he disappointed the Pirate rooters by striking out. Miller was next and started the trouble. He hit a long drive down the right field foul line that looked for a time as if it might clear the fence. The ball struck just inside the foul line in deep right and then bounded out of view. Leach scored and Miller trotted home after him. The fans went wild, believing it a home run.

I was in doubt as to what decision to render, as it was next to impossible to follow the ball from my position back of the plate. When it hit the ground the fans in the bleachers all stood up and leaned over the railing, practically cutting off my view of the final destination of the ball. I conferred with Bill Klem, who was working the bases, but he was as much in doubt as I, as to whether it was a double or a home run. Fred Clarke of the Pirates was insisting on a home run, while Hughey Jennings of the Tigers claimed the hit was only good for two bases. I wanted to do justice to both clubs, but it



seemed the only thing I could do was to make a guess. Then I had an inspiration and decided to take the long chance it offered. I rushed out into right field with Jennings and Clarke at my heels.

"Was that ball fair or foul?" I asked.

There was none but Pittsburgh rooters in that section, as it was reserved for them alone, and in an instant a hundred voices yelled:

"It was fair by a foot."

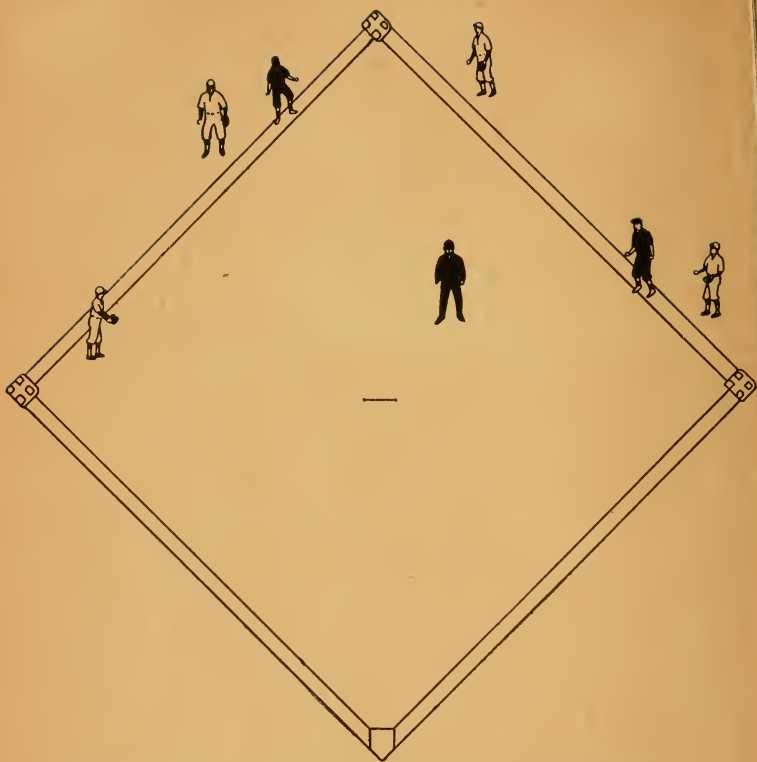
It was then up to me to learn into which stand the ball bounded after striking the ground. The fans did not know a ground rule had been agreed upon.

"Well, if it was fair, where did it bounce?" I called back.

"It bounded into this stand," yelled back the fans. "Yes, and I have the ball and I am going to keep it," said one spectator as he exhibited a brand new ball.

The stand was on foul territory and meant the hit was only good for two bases. Neither Clarke nor Jennings had anything further to say. Miller was sent back to second and the game proceeded. The Pirates did no further scoring, and lost 7 to 2, Donovan being invincible after the first inning. Had the fans not set me right, I would have allowed a home run. It would have probably put the Tigers to rout, and it might have been unnecessary to play seven games to decide the winner of that series.

That decision was also the cause of four umpires being used in the following world series games. Had an umpire been stationed in right field that day it would not have been necessary to have appealed to the fans.



### SHOWING POSITION OF FIELD UMPIRE WITH RUNNERS ON FIRST AND SECOND

With a runner on first, first and second, or first, second and third, and the infield playing out, a good position for the umpire is about forty feet back of the pitcher and five or six feet to his left. Such a position gives you a chance to shift in the direction where the play may be made. With a left handed pitcher working and a left handed batter up such a position often gets you on a direct line with the batter and obscures his vision. If the batter requests you, as is often the case, simply move about six feet to the right of the pitcher in the direction of third.

## Legality of This Run is Questioned

A play came up in the American League some years ago which involves a question that is a constant source of trouble to ball players, from the amateurs to the majors, and to catchers in particular.

There is one man out and a runner on second, when the batter singles sharply to left field. The runner on second, away to a good start, rounded third and headed for the plate. The left fielder made an excellent throw home. The runner slid so wide of the catcher to avoid being touched that he also missed the plate. The batter had gone to second on the throw-in. The catcher, while realizing he had missed the runner, was also pretty certain the runner had missed the plate. Both regained their feet about the same time. Immediately the catcher started after the runner, and the runner realizing he had no chance to get back to the plate without being touched started for the bench. It took the catcher some ten or fifteen steps before he put the ball on the runner. In the meantime the batter who had arrived safely at second, taking in the situation, headed for third, and made that base.

When a player misses first, second or third base there is never any question about how to proceed. Some player instantly gets the ball, and with it in his possession touches the base that has been missed and claims the out. The fact that the home plate is the final goal

is perhaps what confuses all plays at that station. Often a player in sliding into the home plate, misses it, and also is not touched. If such player can scramble back to the plate and reach it before he is touched with the ball he has a right to do so. A play in which the catcher attempts to touch the runner, and then has the runner race to the bench or to any portion of the field, puts a different complexion on the matter. In such cases all the catcher need do is touch the plate with the ball in his possession.

Failure to touch the plate by the runner can create all kinds of trouble. In an important game in which I was umpiring balls and strikes, the home team scored the winning run in the ninth with two down, the batter hitting safely, scoring the runner who was on second. The hit was of such a nature that the runner from second beat the play by at least ten feet. The throw was a trifle short and the catcher was probably six feet in front of the plate receiving it, when the runner crossed the plate. He was in such a position that it was impossible for him to give the runner any attention.

One often wonders why many things happen on the ball field. That player never did touch home plate, although he was not hurried. His last stride carried him over the plate at least six inches. Knowing that run decided the game, the visiting team rushed off the field, as did the catcher, who was in no position to see the runner had failed to touch the plate. I managed to get off the field as hurriedly as the rest, for I wasn't looking for trouble.

I had hardly reached my dressing room before three or four newspaper men came to inquire about the play. From their position in the press box they could see the player had failed to touch the plate. The newspaper men raised the contention that since a runner must touch each base and then the home plate to score a run, that the run was never legally registered. They also raised the question as to the attitude the umpire should assume on such plays. Plays in which a runner fails to touch a base are plays which require that a complaint be registered by the side affected, and that otherwise the umpire shall disregard the error. On such plays if the umpire stood at the plate, after the team had left, he would reveal that something was wrong and instead of being merely a judge of plays, would be acting as adviser to one of the teams.

## Three Similar Plays—Different Rulings

Here are three plays that puzzle. I am often asked to give an explanation of the difference that exists from the penalty standpoint. In appearance each play is the same, yet three different rulings are possible.

*Play No. 1.*—A runner is on first and he tries to steal second. He succeeds, but the batter jostles the catcher as he is about to make the throw. In this play the batter is called out for interference, while the runner is sent back to first, since no bases can be run on such an interference.

*Play No. 2.*—A runner is on third, one man is out, the runner attempts to steal home. It is evident the play is going to be close. The batter decides to pull a bit of wise stuff and interferes with the catcher so that he is unable to put the ball on the runner before he reaches the plate. The interference was similar to that in Play No. 1. In this play the penalty is shifted from the batsman to the runner, for the runner is declared out and the batsman allowed to continue his time at bat.

*Play No. 3.*—A runner is on third, two are out, the runner on third attempts to steal home. The batsman creates an interference similar to Plays 1 and 2. He so hinders the catcher that he is unable to touch the runner. In this case, the penalty is placed on the batsman, he being declared out for interference.

While in some respects these plays are very definite, and are specifically covered in a roundabout way, I seri-



ously doubt if any series of plays, in which the action is similar, creates more confusion. Other than simply quoting the rules which cover the plays, I shall attempt to explain why the rule makers have shifted the penalty in these three plays.

In Play No. 1, it is the batsman who has grievously erred. His interference has killed any chance the catcher might have had of getting the runner. It is obvious he should suffer the penalty by being called out. Since it would be unfair to allow the runner to advance on a play in which the fielder making the play had been interfered with, the runner is sent back to his original base.

In the second case, there being one out at the time, the runner on third attempts a steal of home. A similar interference enables the runner to score. A good many people figure the penalty should be to send the runner back to third and declare out the batsman. Such a penalty would enable a wise batter to nullify the play any time he believed the runner was sure to be retired. To do away with such methods the rule makers, with one or none out, have made the penalty all the more severe by ruling the runner out.

With two men down, a similar interference results in the batter being called out. You ask why not continue the ruling as in Play No. 2 and still call the runner out. With two down and such a play, some one must be called out for the interference. Since no run can score, regardless of who is called out, the penalty is shifted back on the batter. It has been the purpose of the rule makers in inflicting the penalty to make it as severe as possible in each case.

## Balk Rule is a Trouble Maker

On the face it may not seem that the balk rule and base-running have anything in common. As a matter of fact no two features of the national pastime are so closely related. During the past four or five years base-running, one of the game's prettiest features, has been on the decline. I feel safe in saying the deceptive moves practised by many pitchers has more seriously affected base-running than any other thing.

The successful base-runner must be able to get away to a good lead. A foot or two on the getaway means everything when many decisions are based on a matter of a few inches. Ability to get the break by getting away with the start of the delivery is a wonderful advantage. It is usually the difference between out and safe. The brainy base-runner is the player who studies the delivery of the pitcher closely and is usually able to decide when the pitcher is going through with his delivery or when he is going to throw to first.

Of late years pitchers have so tried to circumvent the balk rule that every trick of the trade has been brought into play to deceive the base-runner, yet pass the muster of the umpire. Many pitchers have developed moves to first that so closely resemble their pitching delivery that the runner is almost at sea trying to pick the proper spot to start his steal. Of course this is all wrong. The pitcher's style of delivery and move to first must differ.

Some do, but it would be almost necessary to get a strong microscope to note the exact difference.

Usually the left-handers give more trouble on the balk rule than right-handers. While the major league umpires may be lax, the minors are even more so, and it is a caution the moves some of the recruits bring up to the majors. A left-handed pitcher joined an American League club one year who had a movement that was fatal to a base-runner if he took a lead of more than two or three steps. It is unfortunate for such recruits, because it makes them start a new style and often retards their natural ability. If all managers would just get over praising moves that are balks nine times out of ten pitchers would not be so fussy and base-running would be increased. It is possible to develop a good move that will hold runners on closely but won't catch many napping. Such moves are praiseworthy, but most pitchers are not content with that; they want to catch them off.



A CLOSE DECISION BY BILLY EVANS.

## Rules Don't Cover Freak Possibility

It is possible to work out some wonderful freak plays on paper, yet in many cases more peculiar tangles take place on the ball field. Bill Brennan, former National and Federal League umpire, had an unusual one come under his observation in the early days of the Federal League. Brennan's ruling was the common sense interpretation. I believe it will be followed as a precedent, yet the rules do not clearly define what action should be taken.

Until recently, when a manager wanted to make a quick change of pitchers and had no one warmed up, he had a system of jockeying that usually gave him the needed time. It delayed the game and displeased spectators. The manager would hurry the pitcher he intended to use to the "bull-pen" to get warmed up. He would then notify the umpire such a player would pitch. The rules gave that twirler the right to throw five balls. The pitcher would usually consume more time than necessary in doing so. Then the manager would decide he wanted some other pitcher to work and would so announce to the umpire. The new pitcher would take advantage of his rights. Often a manager would send in as many as four or five relief pitchers, who would simply consume as much time as possible in throwing the five warm-up balls allowed. In the meantime the pitcher the manager really intended to use would be taking advantage of his

manager's dilatory tactics by getting into the best shape possible.

This feature was so overdone, the rule makers found it necessary to take some action that would eliminate the practice. A rule was incorporated which made it necessary for any pitcher sent in as a substitute to continue to pitch until the batsman at bat has been put out or has reached first base. That broke up the jockeying practice and made managers more careful about having the proper pitcher ready to send in as relief twirler. Now for the freak happening that was put up to Umpire Brennan for a ruling.

The game was played at Brooklyn. In the first half of the ninth, the visitors filled the bases after two men were down. The Brooklyn pitcher was in distress, and if my memory serves me correctly Jim Bluejacket, the Indian, was sent in as relief pitcher. Before he had had a chance to throw a ball to the man at the plate Bluejacket, by a snap throw to first base, managed to catch the runner at that base napping, retiring the side. Little was thought of the play at the time, but in the last half of the ninth it caused an argument.

Brooklyn needed two runs to win. It happened that with runners on second and third, it was Bluejacket's turn to bat. Pitchers as a rule are not good hitters, so this seemed the logical place for Brooklyn to send in a pinch hitter. A benchwarmer was therefore sent to hit for Bluejacket. When said substitute made known his intention to Umpire Brennan, a lengthy argument ensued. The manager of the team in the field insisted Blue-



jacket had not done what the rules prescribed he should do—pitch to the man at the bat until he was retired or reached first. His snap throw to first had retired the side and eliminated that chance. The manager of the team in the field insisted that since Bluejacket had failed to do so, he must remain in the game; that the team at bat had no right to substitute a hitter for him. Brennan overruled the protest on the ground that the rule was not made to cover such a situation, but simply to prevent jockeying, and that in retiring the side the pitcher had fulfilled his mission. The batter sent in as pinch hitter singled, winning the game.

## Play That Always Starts An Argument

Bill Carrigan is one of the brainiest fellows that ever handled a big league ball club. Not only is Carrigan a great leader of men, but he is a close student of the game. I don't believe Carrigan ever made a foolish kick in his life. Any time Bill sought a conference with the umpire, he invariably had a good reason. Bill never entered a protest on the theory that he was absolutely right, or that the official was absolutely wrong. He made his claims because in his mind there existed a doubt and he sought a reason for the ruling.

During a game at Boston, in 1916, a batting-out-of-order play almost cropped out among the visitors. The manager of the visiting team at the last moment decided to make a change in his batting order. He shifted the catcher who usually batted eighth to sixth, and dropped the infielder who had always batted sixth to eighth. His team had been in a slump, the catcher was hitting the ball, while the infielder for a couple of weeks had almost been helpless, so he figured moving the catcher up in the batting order might tend to make his hitting of more value.

What nearly proved an unfortunate happening was the failure of the manager to notify the two players involved of the change. In the second inning after the fifth batter had singled with one out, the infielder who had always batted sixth, stepped to the plate, when the

change called for the catcher to hit sixth. Evidently the players had the hit-and-run sign on, for the man on first dashed for second on the first pitch. The batter fouled the ball. The same play was tried on the next pitch. Again the batter fouled, making the count two strikes and no balls. In each instance the runner, of course, was forced to return to first base.

At this juncture the visiting manager became aware of the mistake. He rushed to the plate, had the umpire show him the batting order and then called the proper batsman to the plate, the catcher. The rules provide the proper batsman can be substituted the moment the mistake is discovered, and the balls and strikes called are counted on the proper batsman. The proper batsman then struck out on the next ball pitched, so that nothing came of what promised to be a tangled situation.

Several players on the bench later informed me Bill had noticed the mistake the moment the improper batsman stepped into the box, and was all set to dash out to the plate and enter his protest the moment the improper batsman was retired or reached first in safety. In either case, had the protest been immediately made, all acts made possible by the improper batsman would have been nullified and the proper batsman would have been declared out. It was the following day Carrigan brought up what might have been the unusual feature of the situation.

"I am looking for a little information, Bill," is the way Carrigan greeted me. "Say, the improper batsman missed either of those two balls he swung at and fouled,

and on one of them runner on first managed to steal second, would you have allowed the runner to remain on second?"

The point Carrigan was trying to make was apparent. The rule states no bases shall be run or runs scored because of any act of the improper batsman. This brought up the question as to whether the striking at and missing the ball by the improper batsman constituted an act. While I had never given the play any thought, never having had it come up, I told Carrigan I would allow the runner to remain at second. I would certainly have called him out, had he been thrown out, hence should call him safe if he beat the play. I could not figure where any act of the batter would have played any particular part in aiding the base-runner, hence I figured he was advancing at his peril.

## A Freak Batting-Out-of-Order Play

Batting-out-of-order plays are common among amateurs. Every now and then such situations come up in the majors. I have officiated in two big league games, in which players batting out of their order caused considerable confusion.

I believe a game in Washington some years ago about wins the championship for freak happenings. I was umpire-in-chief, but can take no credit for what happened. The situation that developed made every one connected with the game look rather foolish, myself in particular.

Branch Rickey, a bright base ball man, was managing the St. Louis club. Carrying out the rules of the game, Rickey, prior to the start, walked to the plate and gave me his batting order. It seems there had been some doubt in Manager Rickey's mind as to how he would bat Jimmy Austin and Bobby Wallace. The batting order he presented to me as the official one had Austin hitting sixth and Wallace eighth. It was the custom of Rickey to have his trainer keep a detailed score. In repeating his batting order to the trainer, Rickey had Wallace in sixth position and Austin eighth, shifting the two from the official order. That is the way the two players batted until the final inning. Had not Manager Rickey decided to use a substitute batter the mistake would probably have never been discovered. He so elected, the mixup

was disclosed, and one of the most peculiar situations that has ever come up in a major league game was the result.

After one man was retired Wallace came through with a clean hit. Catcher Agnew, seventh batter, was taken out and Clarence Walker was sent to hit in his place. When Walker reached the plate, he informed me that he was hitting for Agnew. It was the first change either manager had made. I took out my batting order to verify it. Then I discovered Wallace had batted out of order all during the game, five times in all. Catcher Henry of the Washington club was standing at my side as I inspected the batting order and he noticed the mistake. He asked for a ruling.

It was an unusual occurrence. Wallace from the first inning had batted out of order, as had Austin. The St. Louis players had followed the batting order on the bench, which differed from that given me by Manager Rickey. The rule on this point is specific. It states that when a batter hits out of his proper position, and the mistake is discovered before a ball is pitched to the succeeding batsman, the proper batsman should be called out.

According to the official batting order Austin should have batted sixth. As Wallace had batted in that position when he hit safely in the ninth inning, I declared out the proper batsman, Austin. That made two out. Walker then batted for Agnew, as had been Rickey's intention. He went out retiring the side. Had Walker hit safely while batting for Agnew, Wallace would have come to bat again in the same inning. The fact that he

had once batted did not affect the situation, other than wasting his hit, since Austin, the proper batsman, was declared out. There are some who contend that as the two men had batted out of order five times prior to the discovery of the mistake such batting order should have been followed throughout. The rules, however, state that the batting order given the umpire is the official one, as there was no big league precedent for such a happening, I played it safe by sticking closely to the playing code.



## Star Players Easy to Handle

"Why is it that star players seldom make any trouble for the umpire?" That is a question that is asked me time and again. The lover of base ball watches carefully every move of the game, and naturally he has observed that the real stars of the game rarely kick so strongly that it becomes necessary to put them out of the game. National League umpires tell me that Alexander and Mathewson never disputed a called ball or strike. No American League umpire can ever recall the time that Walter Johnson questioned a ruling. In fact, I have often heard him tell other members of his team that the umpire was right when the general opinion was that the official had erred in his ruling.

It is the same in any other branch of the sport, the really great catchers, the crack infielders and the brilliant outfielders, as a rule, accept the decisions of the umpires without any protest to speak of. Don't think for a minute that these players are of the same opinion as the umpire in all cases, positively no. They often believe the umpire has erred, in a good many cases they let the official know just what they think about the decision, but they invariably do it in such a way that any umpire with any common sense would have no reason for taking offense. I have often heard people say that Eddie Collins is not aggressive enough. They form this opinion because Collins is not being put out of the game every so often.

It is a fact that Eddie Collins is an aggressive player, but of a type that is not known to the public. Collins can protest as strongly as any player in the business. When he believes the umpire has erred he never fails to register his protest, but there is nothing of the grand stand variety in the protest. He does nothing by word or action that will cause the crowd to believe that the umpire has erred. For that reason Collins is always listened to, and given consideration when he enters a protest, for the umpires know it is the expression of an honest opinion.

But to get back to the opening question, the real reason that star players seldom incur the displeasure of the umpire, is simply that they never find it necessary to seek an alibi in order to cover up either lack of ability, or failure to have properly completed a play. The real good ball player can always make good on natural ability, even if the umpire every now and then gets him into a hole because of a mistake. Umpires make mistakes, so do star ball players, both are human, and the star player, who has some brains, or he wouldn't be a star, is broad minded enough to take all things into consideration.

The fellows who make the most trouble are the players who believe they are stars, yet fall considerably shy of that class. This phase of the question holds good in all branches of the sport, the majors, the minors, the semi-professionals and the amateurs. Another class of players who make trouble for the big league umpire, is the bush leaguer fresh from the small time circuit. A good many of these fellows come up to the majors with the

impression that in order to get in good with their manager they must argue with the umpire, and in all probability get put out of the game. I can recall half dozen such cases of players now rated as stars. Just as soon as they got over the idea, that getting put out of the game a couple of times a week was the proper kind of aggressiveness, they never made any trouble for the officials.

Major league leaders like aggressive players. The minor leaguer who can show pepper and aggressiveness of the right sort, has a much better chance as a rule than the player who accepts every ruling without a word. A player adds no strength to a team when he is chased to the club house, or has to sit out a suspension in the grand stand. The day of that style of aggressiveness is past. It is costly to the owner, club and patrons, for often they are deprived of seeing the player who attracted them to the park. The modern manager wants the player who can be aggressive, yet do it in a way that escapes the wrath of the umpire.

Johnny Evers is one of the few really great players who is in constant hot water with the umpires. Evers has just one thing strongly in his favor in this respect—his kicks are actually from the heart, not actuated by a desire to alibi. Evers is one of the greatest players of all times, reputed to be one of the brainiest infielders in the history of the game. I have never met Evers personally. I am told that he is a mild mannered individual off the field, but on the ball field he is a raging torrent when all the breaks, as well as the umpire's

rulings, appear to be going the wrong way. Evers' kicking has had one good feature, it is not the alibi sort; simply the nature of the man when in the heat of battle.

Of the modern ball players Johnny Evers and Eddie Collins stand out prominently. They are credited with being the two greatest second basemen in the game. Arguments galore have been caused by discussion of the relative merits of the two stars. There is little to choose between the fielding. Collins is the better batsman, and on the bases also shows to advantage. Both have far more than the average amount of gray matter, and clubs on which they play invariably look up to them to direct the play. Evers made a great team out of the Boston Braves, in fact played a big part in turning a second division club into a pennant winner and a world champion. Eddie Collins put an awful crack in the Athletics when Mack sold him to Chicago. He proved just the man needed to round out Comiskey's club, and make it a strong contender.

In most respects these two star players are similar and practically equal, yet in one respect they are entirely different in their attitude toward the umpire. Evers is aggressive; so is Collins, although a great many fans do not regard him as that type of player. Evers, with his fiery temper, can protest only in a way that aggravates the official and results in his ejection. Collins can register an equally strong protest, yet do it in such a way that he gets consideration rather than hasty ejection. In all his career Collins has never been put out of a ball ground, while Johnny has been given the gate in so

many contests that he has probably quit keeping track of his banishment a long time ago. In a good many cases, trouble with the officials means a three-day suspension, often a much longer time. It is almost impossible to compute the great value of such wonderful players as Evers and Collins to a team in the fight for the pennant. They are almost absolutely essential.

In that one feature of play Collins has a decided and distinct advantage over Evers. He is always in the game, giving his club his very best efforts. Evers does the same when in the game, but Johnny is often playing the rôle of spectator, because of his failure to see things as the judge of play did. Taking Collins and Evers from the game is just like taking the leading man from a play, in which much of its success depends on the acting of the star. Unquestionably the Boston club dropped many a game which would have been won had Evers been in the lineup.

Collins comes from the school of Connie Mack. Mack's theory is that no club in the history of the game won a pennant by fighting the umpires. He insists that clubs that spend their energy in fighting the opposition invariably gets much better results. Mack figures that any time a star player gets put out of the game, he does not only himself an injustice but also his team mates, the club owner, his league, and the patrons, many of whom perhaps came out to see him play. The great success Mack has had during his long career makes it appear that he employs the proper methods.

## The Umpire, Base Ball's Greatest Alibi

Base ball is largely a game of alibis. The player can always offer an alibi when things do not break his way. The umpire stands out as the greatest of all alibis for the ball player and the fan. The umpire is not infallible, he makes mistakes, but not nearly as many as fan and player would have you believe. Often the umpire renders a perfectly correct decision that changes the result of the game, yet for so rendering the proper decision he is often mobbed and compelled to suffer any number of other indignities at the hands of the fans, who insist he has robbed their team out of the game.

The umpire is one of the most important cogs in the base ball machine, provided he is moving smoothly. Yet most base ball fans regard the umpire as a necessary evil. Lovers of base ball seldom inquire who will umpire the game. They don't go to the park to see the umpire perform, as they do to see any of the great stars pitch. The umpire will never be a drawing card like Tyrus Cobb, Hans Wagner, Napoleon Lajoie, Tris Speaker, or any of the other celebrities of the diamond. As a matter of fact, the only time the umpire is given the slightest consideration by fan or player is when he renders a decision that fails to meet with their approval. Usually the consideration is of a very uncomplimentary nature. If the time ever comes that the fan and player believe the umpire is infallible (the time will never come), then

base ball will lose one of its strongest points, the blaming of the umpire for every defeat. It is surprising what pleasure it gives a lot of people to leave the ball park, positive that had the umpire rendered the proper ruling on the play at the plate, at second, third or first, the game would have been won instead of lost. The umpire gives them an alibi.

Just so long as the umpire shows up for the game every day and performs his duties in a capable manner, his presence is almost unnoticed. There is never any applause for him, as is the player's portion when he pulls a great play. There is never any encouragement from the crowd, for the umpire is always in hostile territory. He is the common enemy of the base ball fan at large. It would seem then, from the consideration usually meted out to the umpire, that he played a very minor rôle in the game of base ball. When then is the importance of an umpire realized? To illustrate this point, I am going to relate a situation which a veteran umpire created, simply to prove that after all the umpire is a very essential factor. I will quote the umpire as closely as possible.

"It is the deciding game of the world series, each team has won three games. Forty thousand people are packed into the park to see one of the most important games in the history of base ball, a contest which would decide the winner of base ball's classic. To each player alone the winning of the game meant a difference of at least \$1,500. The player of a losing team in the world series is certain of \$2,000 for his share, yet the umpire on whose decisions the outcome of the series hinges gets only



half that amount. A dispute arises just before the final game, the umpires have a grievance that cannot be adjusted, and they refuse to officiate. There is a delay in starting the game. It is impossible to get satisfactory umpires. The game must be played, so there is nothing to do but to agree on two players. When the fans see that two players, not versed in the art of umpiring, are going to officiate, they let out a mighty shout of disapproval. They want so important a game in charge of umpires having a reputation for being impartial and competent. Close decision after close decision comes up early in the game, and the player umpires are in constant trouble. Before the contest is completed the affair has developed into more or less of a farce. A goodly portion of the crowd has left the park disgusted. At such a time as that," concludes the veteran umpire, "the importance of the umpire would be made evident to the fans."

There are infielders in base ball who never fail to touch the base-runner if you take their word for it. There is never a play but what the base-runner is out. On the other hand, there are any number of base-runners who are never touched with the ball if you take their word for it. When they attempt to steal a base or take two bases on a hit, they always manage to elude the infielder, if you would believe them. With two such classes, it is easy to see that the umpire must of necessity find himself in trouble when he renders a decision, for each decision must be against one of the parties concerned. After such a play the base-runner, if he is declared out, goes back to the bench and tells his team mates what a

blind man the umpire is, and usually shows just how far he was missed. If the runner is declared safe, the infielder lets the world know that he had him by a yard. No matter how the verdict is rendered, someone is sure to alibi himself at the expense of the umpire.

Every fan has attended a game in which the pitcher by some show of disapproval would let it be known that he didn't regard the eyesight of the umpire as perfect. The catcher can in various ways, make it apparent to the crowd that he is not concurring with every decision on balls and strikes. Nine times out of ten the umpire has properly called the pitches. In a pinch the pitcher is looking for everything. To many of the twirlers balls that are from three to six inches outside or inside, are right through the middle. If his control is bad, there is nothing in the world easier for him to do, than to alibi himself at the expense of the umpire. There are many things he can do, that just escapes ejection from the game, yet are of such a nature that the base ball fan is soon wise that he is not agreeing with the umpire on balls and strikes. The next day the umpire often discovers that his bad eyesight was responsible for the pitcher's poor control and the loss of the game.

There is one situation in base ball that invariably gets the umpire in trouble, unless the pitch is an extremely wide one, or the batter relieves the situation by taking a swing. Imagine the bases filled, two out and three balls and two strikes on the batter. Have it the ninth inning if you want to have the situation all the more intense, and the score a tie. On the calling of the next

ball really depends the game. If it is a ball, it means the game for the home team; if it is a strike, the score remains a tie, and the visiting club has a chance to win out in extra innings. To the home fan a ball merely a few inches inside or outside, high or low, looks like a strike, if the visiting team is at the bat. If the home team is at the bat, pitches that are just good enough to be called strikes by the umpire are regarded as balls by the fans. Any time the umpire calls the batter out on such a pitch, with the situation I have described above existing, he is bound to find himself in trouble. Even if the ball is right through the middle, the batter who has struck out in a pinch, will invariably alibi himself at the expense of the umpire by declaring that it was a foot outside. In such situations there are some pitchers who never throw anything but strikes, if you would take their word for it. On the other hand, there are many batters who insist that at such times it is impossible for the pitcher to throw other than a ball.

Often when the umpire appears to be most seriously at fault, he is absolutely correct. Such plays are when the ball easily beats the runner to the base, but the fielder fails to touch him. Nearly every base-runner of any merit in the game at present has developed the fallaway slide to such a degree that touching the runner is extremely difficult, unless the infielder is equally clever in handling the ball. A runner like Ty Cobb, the Detroit star, gives the infielder little more than the spikes on his shoes to touch as he slides into a base. In plays where it is up to the fielder to touch the runner to complete

the out, the average base ball fan watches the ball. If the ball reaches the base ahead of the runner, he naturally presumes that the runner is out. Under ordinary conditions the runner should be an easy out, with the fielder waiting with the ball, yet time after time the runner eludes the touch through the fallaway slide, though the ball often beats him a yard or more to the base. Such plays invariably get the umpire in trouble, for the runner is positive that he wasn't touched, while the fielder is equally certain he put the ball all over him.

The umpire is unquestionably the greatest alibi in base ball. When he steps on the field he has eighteen active players, a swarm of substitutes from both sides, two wise managers and a hostile crowd arrayed against him. When mistakes are made the easiest way is to try to place the blame on the umpire. In the future please don't blame the umpire every time you see a player kick, for he isn't always wrong, as some people would have you believe.

## Umpire's Equipment Very Important

The position of an umpire is a hazardous one from any angle you consider it. Therefore it is a mark of wisdom for the umpire to afford himself every protection possible in going about his work. The judges of play cannot exercise too much care in selecting satisfactory equipment.

A good mask is a most essential thing. It is hard to advise what style of mask is best, each umpire must be his own judge as to that part of his equipment. The stock of masks carried by Spalding is so varied that usually you can get a mask to suit by simply having the clerk in charge show the various styles and, by trying them on, you can reach a decision as to which style fits your face best, and conforms to your vision.

Contrary to most umpires I like a very tight-fitting mask, that is heavily padded, and has a special reinforced padding at the chin. I also like ear protection, but wear stationary pads which are fastened tight to the side of the mask and do not swing. Since I am often in Chicago during the American League season, I simply go out to the Spalding factory and have them make such a mask to suit me. It is possible for anyone to get a similar mask, at only a slight additional expense,

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Spalding's base ball catalogue, issued annually, contains pictures, descriptions and prices of everything needed for the game. Mailed free to any address. Write to Spalding store nearest to you (see list on inside front cover).

or to have worked out any stunt they care to have put on the mask.

A good protector is always a wise investment. There are two kinds, the rubber inflated and a papier mâché and bamboo arrangement. The inflated protector is worn outside, while the other is worn under the coat. I prefer the rubber protector, simply because I think it affords the better protection. However, that is merely a matter of opinion. The other style has to be made to order.

Great care should be used in the selection of shoes. No umpire should be without a pair of the special umpire shoes now being made by Spalding. I wouldn't care to work back of the bat without a pair of these wonderful shoes. When I think of the injuries I used to suffer because of being hit on the instep or toes by a foul tip, I can hardly understand why no one thought of the present shoe sooner. With its strong box toe and padded tongue, it is absolutely impossible to suffer a foot injury. The shoe is so made that one can run at top speed without any inconvenience. Major league umpires use two pairs, wearing the ordinary shoe on the bases, the special one when working balls and strikes.

A pair of shin guards, which also have a special knee protection, an aluminum protector which fastens around the waist, and an indicator, are a few of the other necessities. Of course, no athlete would think of going on the ball field without wearing a "Bike" suspensory.

With the above equipment, a good pair of eyes and plenty of nerve, umpiring is a nice job, and, as the late Tim Hurst always said, "You can't beat the hours, 3 to 5."

## Umpire Should be Familiar With Changes in Rules

BY JOHN B. FOSTER,

Editor Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide.

Properly speaking, in regard to the changes in the playing rules of the national game, we should not say the "new base ball rules." It should be the "amendments to the old rules." Somehow it comes easier to say "new rules" and for a long time to come, perhaps until other rule changes are adopted, the modifications which were put into effect in 1920 will be known as the "new rules."

Had the changes not been so radical there would not have been so much of a tendency to refer to them as the "new rules." When I was a member of the rules committee in 1914 some minor changes were made in the rules, but they were very minor as compared with the changes made in 1920, and no one grouped them collectively as "new rules."

For awhile no doubt there will be boast that the rules have not done all that was expected in curing the "freak" deliveries. Time will show the protests to be unavailing and it will also show that "freak" deliveries either were creatures of the imagination or that they have been eliminated. For my part I think about fifty per cent. of the "freak" delivery was ball players' gossip. I know at least one player who complained more often and insisted



more combatively than almost any other player with whom I have an acquaintance that the loss of his batting average was due to "freak" pitching. An oculist quietly informed me that there was a more potent reason than "freak" pitching.

But whether incipient myopia or slippery elm and soapstone are primary causes in curtailing batting it will be found after the pitching amendments have got well under way that the day of artificial aids to pitching is done. Dead and done and "some more." The pitcher in the future can do nothing with the ball except pitch it as it comes to him. Indeed, he must be careful as to the condition in which he receives it. If some other ball player has soiled it or rubbed it with a bit of sandpaper, or smeared it with some fluid which is not within the scope of the rule, the pitcher is liable to be removed from the game. It will be severe to be thrown out of a game and also incur a ten-day suspension for something for which one is not guilty. It will be a very foolish pitcher on any base ball club who takes that chance. There may be pitchers who would gladly be thrown out every ten days or so. One suspension after another would be perfect joy to them, but after about two suspensions no doubt there would be a noise from the office of the president of the club which would sound like tearing up a check and another ball player's salary would be trimmed without as much as asking by his leave.

The ball must be kept in much the same condition as when it was removed by the umpire from the box in which it was contained. Of course there will be the wear

and tear of the game. How else could the ball be used? But there must not be surreptitious rubbing of its cover on rough substances, nor must the cover be saturated with foreign liquids. Saliva is barred. The young player and the old player may not even expectorate in the pitching glove and rub the ball around on the palm of the glove. More than that, the pitcher may not rub the ball in his gloved hand, whether the palm of the glove is dry or moist. The reason for this is not that base ball is to be less manly, but that it is to be more manly. Real athletics call for tests of skill by mental and muscular effort. Base ball prior to 1920, as regards pitching, was a test of skill with some players, not more than fifty per cent., and a test of combinations of physical strength, a very feeble knowledge of curves, little or no knowledge of change of pace, and not much of pitching strategy on the part of the other fifty per cent. The worst part of the introduction of the artificial elements in base ball, particularly pitching, was that some of the real good pitchers got into the habit of fooling with freak performances. They tried experiments now and then which they would better have avoided. The pitcher got to be less and less a part of the game as relates to the parity of fielders, catchers and outfielders. If he were a "freak" pitcher and not much of anything else his team mates looked for a good game only so far as his "freaks" were under control. If they did not behave properly they knew that the game might be lost at any time, and it is a fact, which seemed not to have been noticed by all of the critics, that most managers—most wise managers in any

event—always kept a pitcher well warmed up on the day when a “freak” pitcher was to start a game.

Every base ball enthusiast should welcome back the return of real pitching. All of us are going to see, if we live long enough, a new type of pitcher, not new in the sense that there never have been any like it in the past, but new in the sense that we have not had many like it in the immediate past.

When we can get our small boys, who will be the big pitchers some day, to emulate such men as Clarkson, Keefe, Welch, King, McCormick, Goldsmith, Corcoran, Nichols, Young, Mathewson—the list would be longer than that were it necessary to cite more names—we will begin to have base ball in which human intelligence has taken a plunge back again into the middle of the diamond. The “freak” pitchers have made their reputations in their time, but they will always be classified as “freak” pitchers. They never will enjoy the fame in the base ball world which began with a performance like that of Albert G. Spalding, who won game after game when brains and control of the ball were real tests of a pitcher's ability.

Other changes have been made in the rules. One of them has to do with the intentional base on balls to a batter. The rule makers tried to make it easier for the batter. Perhaps that is not quite right. Perhaps I should have said they tried to make a base on balls look more like a base on balls. I am afraid that they have not helped the situation much, although it will be out of the question for the catcher to move a long distance to either side of the plate to catch the ball from the pitcher's de-

livery. A base on balls may be given as it always has been given. A little more skill may be required by the pitcher in giving it, but not so much more after all. When the pitcher is making it appear that he is endeavoring to pass the batter there will be quite as much clamor from the stands as ever there was, but it will not make a particle of difference with the manager who is seeking to win a ball game and whose idea of winning the game is to keep a particular batter from having a chance to make a home run, especially if that particular batter happens to be of the type who can make home runs.

The squeeze play has been made rather safe for the team at bat. That is a point which seems to have been overlooked. If I were a manager in 1920 I believe that I would not hesitate to try the squeeze play now and then, even if I did not like it very well as a strategy. The catcher may not do much of anything with the ball if the batter and the runner are in "cahoots" trying to get the runner home. The umpire, if he believes that the catcher has interfered, may permit the runner to score and the batter to go to first base. There are not many penalties in base ball so severe as that. Usually, only one out is allowed, but here is a double header out which can tie a score or win a game.

A great deal was done to clear up disputed points in the rules. For that everybody will be thankful. It may be a long time before another change is made in the code, but they can stand rewriting even as they exist today, and rewriting would simplify and clarify them far beyond the conception of those who have to deal with them daily.

The small boy is bothered by the archaic manner in which many of the rules are worded. Even the large boy has his troubles. Thank goodness most of the boys have a good grounding in the game itself and that is worth a lot. At any rate I have tried to make a start in telling by explanatory notes for the rules in Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide—the first time this has ever been done in base ball, by the way—what is the intent and meaning of the text, and although it is but a start, nevertheless it may serve to eliminate many disputes that arise during the course of a season. The reader would be surprised if he saw the number of queries that come daily during the playing season to the office of the Guide, asking for the editor's decision on points of play. They come by mail, telegraph and telephone, and come continuously. From Newfoundland to the Philippines they all "want to know."

## “Knotty Problems”

In the first edition of Mr. Evans' book, "How to Umpire," the publishers included a number of the "Knotty Problems" that had appeared in the Spalding Guide for several years previously. Mr. Evans also added a few that had arisen during the course of his experience in the American League.

These "Knotty Problems" met with instant approval, not only from umpires but from players and "fans." They served to enlighten many who had wrong conceptions of the meaning of certain rules and did a great deal to smooth the path of the arbitrator.

A suggestion, however, has been made by a number of readers that in its former size the book was too bulky for pocket use and easy reference, and it has been decided therefore to make separate books of the instructions for umpires and of the "Knotty Problems." "How to Umpire" will be published hereafter in its present shape and listed as No. 81R in the Spalding Athletic Library series, price 25 cents; while "Knotty Problems" has been brought up to date with many new examples that have arisen since the first edition was printed, including a number that are based upon the rules as revised in 1920, these changes in the rules of base ball rendering some of the former problems obsolete. The new edition of "Knotty Problems" will be known as No. 75R in the Spalding Athletic Library series and will cost 25 cents.

## Some New Books on Base Ball

*How to Bat.* By John B. Foster, editor of Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide and Spalding's Official Base Ball Record. Spalding Athletic Library series No. 80R. Price 25 cents.

It has been demonstrated that the boy who is a beginner in base ball—and the beginner who may not invariably be a boy—is helped a great deal by the information which he receives from practical instruction about outdoor games. Once there was a time when people were a little inclined to scoff at the idea of instruction. It was their impression that all games were "sort o' acquired second nature." That belief has been well corrected.

In any book of instruction which is written by one with practical knowledge there may be one hint or one statement of value which is worth the reading of the book and many times its cost.

In his new book, "How to Bat," Mr. Foster, who has been long associated with base ball in all capacities, has obtained his information from the fountain source. One by one the various topics that help to make a good batter are touched upon.

In "How to Bat" the value of good batting is emphasized. The "attack" in the strategy of base ball is one of its most interesting features. Some think it is the most interesting. For that reason the subject of bunting is taken up, the theory and good effect of the sacrifice is discussed, the theory of the hit-and-run play is outlined, the beginner is told a great deal about placing hits, which, by the way, is a sure token of expertness on the part of a player, and the best methods of "straightout" batting are outlined.

*How to Pitch.* Compiled by J. Ed Wray, sport expert for the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*. Spalding Athletic Library series No. 79R. Price 25 cents.

Keeping pace with the changes in the rules, which have readjusted all the theories about pitching, the writer of this most recent work has gone into the subject of serving the ball to the batter from every standpoint. It is a work of instruction and analysis as well as one of sound advice.

Explanation is given of the curves and the best use to which they can be put during a ball game. The beginner is told how to effect change of pace and is also given sound advice as to how he should pitch to batters. The matter of control is empha-



sized and the author has made a very practical demonstration as to one way in which control can be obtained. Of course, it is based on practise, but all of the good points in base ball are brought out by practise.

The beginner is told how to keep in condition and what to do to keep in condition. Excellent advice is given him as to what is best for the ball player. Even if during the summer season one plays in nothing but amateur games, it is better to follow sound and sane methods of diet and general work than to indulge in foods or dainties which are not the proper thing for the human body.

New and original diagrams show many points in base ball which are at the best not well understood by the beginner, but which the diagrams may make more clear. Mention is made of the "freak ball" pitching, but as the day of "freak" pitching is gone in base ball no extended analysis is entered into, and the beginner is advised, as a matter of fact, not to fool with the "freak deliveries," as they are called. They will simply spoil him for better work.

There are chapters by the best authorities in base ball on the various points of good pitching. Walter Johnson has something to say, and so have other pitchers who have made reputations for themselves on the base ball field. It is certain that every player who is interested in pitching will find this book so full of valuable information that he is bound to improve his own style.

*Base Ball for Boys.* Compiled by John B. Sheridan, sport expert for the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* and the originator of the small size diamond for boys adopted by the National and American Leagues at their annual meetings at Chicago, 1920.

Spalding Athletic Library series No. 365. Price 10 cents.

This is a new book on the game of base ball for the "small boy." It is written simply and plainly from an instructive standpoint. It is of value to the beginner of older years, but its main purpose is to encourage the little fellow to develop by right methods his inborn desire to play base ball well.

Sound advice is given about pitching. If the learner begins to pitch the right way he will get into the thick of base ball with much more interest than if he performs for the better part of his boyhood days as an awkward novice. The author provides helps for batting. He gives points on the right way to play to make runs, and runs are what win ball games. All through the work the aim of the author has been to teach base ball by contrast. That is, to point out the incorrect ways and then cite the correct way, with the testimony of some expert to illustrate the correct way.

In connection with the adoption of an "official diamond" and an official base ball for boys it is assured that all of their matches in the future will take on more of a "real championship" than they have in the past. Mr. Sheridan has labored to make it plain to the boys who will compete in the games on their "own diamond" what policy is best to be pursued whenever an emergency arises in a game. There are "emergencies" in boys' games exactly as there are in the games of the "grown-ups" and possibly one mistake which has been made in recent years is that of paying too little attention to the small boys' "emergencies."

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Every boy should be familiar with the rules of the game that he plays, especially since the base ball rules have been changed. Spalding's Guide contains the official rules, together with explanations—something that has not been done in base ball rules before—and a number of new "Knotty Problems." For those who wish to carry the rules only on the field, the rules section has been bound separately in such a manner that it can be extracted without damaging the rest of the book. All the other features that have made the Guide so popular in the past are included. Price 25 cents.

For complete list of books of the Spalding Athletic Library series, see front pages.

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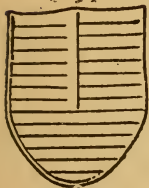
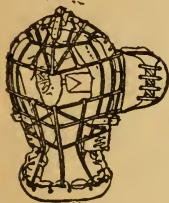
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